MAREN HASSINGER | WINDOW BOXES

ARTIST'S NOTES

The following describes Maren Hassinger's gallery talk at the Whitney Museum at Philip Morris on April 29 and includes the texts that she read:

As the audience entered, I sat facing them, greeting them while shuffling 5 x 7 cards on my knees. When everyone had arrived, I shuffled the deck twice more. I began reading cards from the top of the deck. I read all of the cards, then started again from the beginning. After two complete repetitions, I chose, at random, an ending point. The meaning of the words and their presentation evoke my thinking and working process.

Gardens and White Rooms.

Essence (of Life).

Order/Chaos.

Passion/Desire.

"The Weeds Smell like Iron"—Walker Percy

Movement.

True Experience of Life.

Making Thought Visible.

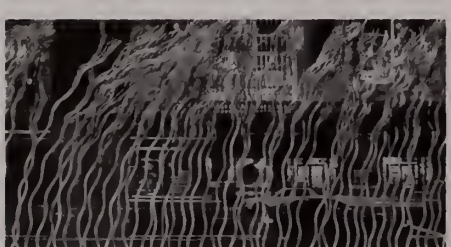
"Mondrian and Malevich, we should remember, like Piper and Hammons, were trying to transform the world."

—Michael Brenson

Opportunities to reflect the waste of progress and fears for the future.

The Sublime.

Wanting to mingle with the earth. To vanish.



To become one with. To enlarge and flow. To lose my ego.

To make work that vanishes.

Where site and piece unite.

Own route.

"My longing all the same, keeps green." —James Schuyler

Wind.

She wasn't a careerist.

Interiority.

Quietism.

Experience.

Oppression of women. Racism. Classism.

(Art) World. World.

Reverie. Reflection on the past.

Longing for that simplicity.

Our relation to nature is <u>our</u> shared history.

Politics.

Environment.

Death.

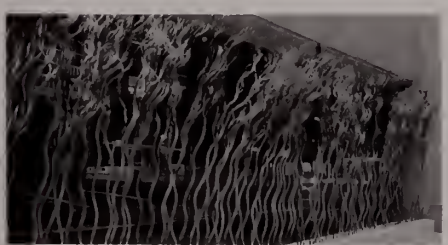
"As a black, I am supposed to keep within a certain sphere of activity. This for 30-odd years I have done, more or less. Now I am for the first time in my almost 53 years sure that I have something of value for the human race. I want a chance to do my work. And I do not want to be told over and over again that my place is with my people; that only as a black in the circumscribed arena of the black world must I work." —Ernest Everett Just, scientist, to Max Wolf, January 21, 1936.

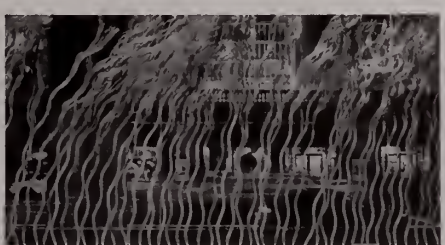
Beauty.

Emphemerality.

Spirituality.

Romanticism.





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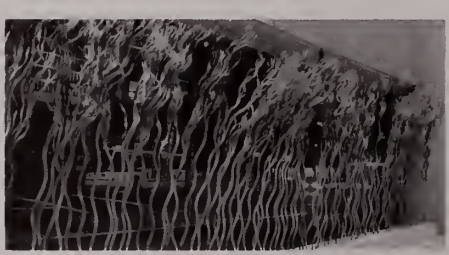

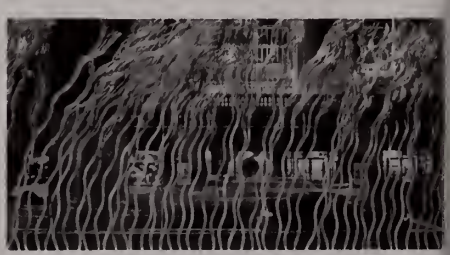

MAREN HASSINGER

Born in Los Angeles, 1947

Studied at Bennington College, Vermont (BA, 1969); University of California, Los Angeles (MFA, 1973)

Lives in East Hampton, New York

SELECTED ONE-ARTIST EXHIBITIONS

1981

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

1985

Art Gallery, Da Vinci Hall, Los Angeles City College

Fine Arts Gallery, California State University, Northridge

1986

Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum and Alice Keck Park, California

1989

Soho 20 Gallery, New York

1990

Gracie Mansion Gallery, New York

1992

Fine Arts Gallery, Long Island University, Southampton, New York

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1985

The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, "From the Studio: Artists-in-Residence, 1984-85"

1986

The Clocktower, The Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Long Island City, New York, "Progressions: A Cultural Legacy"

1987

Museum of African American Art, Los Angeles, "Art in Public Places"

1988

A.I.R. Gallery, New York, "Blue Angel: The Decline of Sexual Stereotypes in Post-Feminist Sculpture" (traveled)

Maryland Institute, College of Art, Baltimore, "Art as Verb: The Evolving Continuum" (traveled)

Jamaica Arts Center, Jamaica, New York, "Workspace '88"

Onetwentyeight, New York, "Lava"

1989

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, "The Appropriate Object"

The Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York, "Transformations and Traditions: Contemporary Afro-American Sculpture"

Hillwood Art Gallery, Long Island University, C.W. Post Campus, Brookville, New York, "Airlines"

Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City, New York, "Sculpture City"

Voorhees Gallery, Hunter College, New York, "Artists at Hunter"

1990

The Atlanta College of Art, Woodruff Arts Center, Georgia, "New History: Beverly Buchanan/Mel Edwards/ Maren Hassinger"

The Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, and The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, "The Decade Show: Frameworks for Identity in the 1980s"

Sculpture Center, New York, "Hassinger, McCarthy, Rodgers, Ziegler"

1991

Jamaica Arts Center, Jamaica, New York, "Three Installations: Renée Green, Maren Hassinger, and Greg Henry"

1992

Guild Hall Museum, East Hampton, New York, "Volume 6: Contemporary Sculptures"

Printmaking Workshop Gallery, New York, "Summer/Selections from the Printmaking Workshop Collection"

The Wood Street Galleries, Pittsburgh, "Five Artists at the Airport: Insights into Public Art"

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The Sculpture Court at the Whitney Museum at Philip Morris offers the public an oasis of calm in the midst of the commotion of 42nd Street and Park Avenue. It occupies the ground floor of the World Headquarters of Philip Morris Companies Inc., a building designed by architect Ulrich Franzen and completed in 1983. Enclosed by a skin of glass and steel girders, the space of the Sculpture Court appears to be a mirage. From the outside, the space is always light and green, seemingly unaffected by seasonal changes. From the inside, it offers the experience of the outdoors buffered against sound and motion. What defines the space most consistently is its engagement with the public. A popular space to meet, eat, and wait, the court attracts an audience that mirrors the varied activities and residents of the neighborhood.

Maren Hassinger has always worked with public spaces. In her early performance pieces, sculptural forms provided an environment for movement and sound. As her aesthetic vocabulary developed, the conjunction of the public and private, the natural and the industrial began to command her aesthetic vocabulary. Made predominantly with industrial materials such as galvanized wire rope, Hassinger's structures nevertheless resemble natural forms—a weed or a branch—that are then configured into haystacks, grass, bushes, and trees.

WINDOW BOXES, which uses the window ledges of the Sculpture Court, again confronts the dualistic character of spaces. Fashioned of twenty-two individual concrete boxes with 5-foot lengths of galvanized steel rope, it acutely demarcates the once fluid definitions between inside and out. Hassinger's irregular growths reiterate the steel veins that outline the Sculpture Court windows, so as to mock the window's formal geometry. Moreover, while the industrial materials echo the man-made quality of the corporate space, their configuration takes on the feel of "nature." At the same time, however, the absence of nature is critiqued: the windblown forms, for example, evoke an element lacking inside the space. **WINDOW BOXES** also suggests a hedge interrupting the previously seamless view from inside to out. Accepting the challenge of using a public interior space, Hassinger has created a work which, in its contrast to the environment, transforms the viewer's experience of that space.

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January 19 - July 30, 1993
Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris

The Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris is funded by Philip Morris Companies Inc.

This brochure, with an introduction by Thelma Golden, associate curator, and notes by Maren Hassinger, accompanies the artist's site-specific installation **WINDOW BOXES.**

© 1993 Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10021

Whitney Museum of American Art
at Philip Morris
Park Avenue at 42nd Street
New York, New York 10017

GALLERY HOURS
Monday–Friday,
11:00 am–6:00 pm
Thursday,
11:00 am–7:30 pm

SCULPTURE COURT HOURS
Monday–Saturday,
7:30 am–9:30 pm
Sunday, 11:00 am - 7:00 pm

Free admission
Tours by appointment
For more information,
call (212) 878 - 2453

STAFF
Thelma Golden
Associate Curator

Jeanette Vuocolo
Manager

Dina Helal
Coordinator, Family and Community Programs

Alexa Griffith
Gallery Coordinator

Design: Bethany Johns Design
Printing: Herlin Press
Photography: George Hirose

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